

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1 to 41 (canceled).

Claim 42 (currently amended): A method of operating a gaming system, said method comprising:

- (a) receiving a value ~~total~~amount associated with a player, said value-amount initially defining a value total being divisible into a plurality of fees;
 - (b) operating at least one play of at least one game for a period of time, the period of time being divisible into a plurality of time intervals;
 - (c) tracking how many of the time intervals pass during the at least one play of the game;
 - (d) deducting one of the fees from the value total for each one of the time intervals which passes, the deduction being independent of any game outcome;
 - (e) tracking a balance of the value total;
 - (f) as long as the balance remains above a level, continuing steps (c), (d) and (e) until a termination event occurs;
 - (g) after the termination event occurs, determining whether any payout is due to the player based on at least one of the deducted fees; and
 - (h) providing the determined payout, if any, to the player.
- ~~for at least one interval, deducting a fee from the value total, wherein said fee is associated with a value, the at least one interval is independent of any plays of any games and the at least one interval is independent of any inputs from the player in association with any plays of any games;~~
- (b)if the value total is greater than zero:

- ~~(i) — determining and displaying at least one value payout associated with at least one displayed outcome for at least one play of a game, wherein said determined value payout is based on any deducted fees, and~~
- ~~(ii) — adding the determined value payout to the value total; and~~
- ~~(d) repeating (b) to (c) at least once.~~

Claim 43 (currently amended): The method of Claim 42, wherein for each time interval, said fees deducted from the value total are equal.

Claim 44 (currently amended): The method of Claim 42, wherein each time interval is an equal interval of time.

Claim 45 (cancelled).

Claim 46 (currently amended): The method of Claim 42~~5~~, which includes determining and displaying at least one ~~value~~ payout associated with at least one displayed outcome for at least one play of the game if the value total is greater than zero after the plurality of time intervals, wherein said determined ~~value~~ payout is based on any deducted fees.

Claim 47 (currently amended): The method of Claim 42~~5~~, which includes stopping the deducting step at least temporarily during the play ~~pausing the plurality of intervals for a period of time, wherein during said period of time, no fees are deducted from the value total.~~

Claim 48 (withdrawn): A method of operating a gaming system, said method comprising:

(a) displaying to a player a graphical indicator of an amount of time the player is eligible to play a game;

(b) displaying to the player a decrease in said amount of time the player is eligible to play the game, wherein said displayed decrease is based on an amount of elapsed time;

(c) if the player inputs a value amount, displaying to the player an increase in said amount of time the player is eligible to play the game; and

(d) if the graphical indicator indicates that the player is eligible to play the game and a random determination occurs to trigger the game, determining and displaying a displayed outcome for said triggered game.

Claim 49 (withdrawn): The method of Claim 48, which includes displaying the amount of time the player is eligible to play the game as a group of bars.

Claim 50 (withdrawn): The method of Claim 48, which includes displaying a first amount of time the player is eligible to play the game a first color and displaying a second amount of time the player is eligible to play the game a second, different color.

Claim 51 (currently amended): A gaming system comprising:

at least one display device;

at least one input device;

at least one processor; and

at least one memory device which stores a plurality of instructions, which when executed by the at least one processor, cause the at least one processor to operate with the at least one display device and the at least one input device to:

(a) receive a value totalamount associated with a player, said ~~value-amount~~ initially defining a value total being divisible into a plurality of fees;

(b) operate at least one play of at least one game for a period of time, the period of time being divisible into a plurality of time intervals;

(c) track how many of the time intervals pass during the at least one play of the game;

(d) deduct one of the fees from the value total for each one of time intervals which passes, the deduction being independent of any game outcome;

~~(b)for at least one interval, deduct a fee from the value total, wherein said fee is associated with a value, the at least one interval is independent of any plays of any games and the at least one interval is independent of any inputs from the player in association with any plays of any games;~~

(e) track a balance of the value total;

~~(e)(f)~~ as long as the balance remains above a level, continue steps (c), (d) and (e) until a termination event occurs;

(g) after the termination event occurs, determine whether any payout is due to the player based on at least one of the deducted fees; and

(h) provide the determined payout, if any, to the player.

(i) if the value total is greater than zero:

(i) determine and display at least one value payout associated with at least one displayed outcome for at least one play of a game, wherein said determined value payout is based on any deducted fees, and

(ii) ~~add the determined value payout to the value total; and~~
(d) ~~repeat (b) to (c) at least once.~~

Claim 52 (currently amended): The gaming system of Claim 51, wherein for each time interval, said fees deducted from the value total are equal.

Claim 53 (currently amended): The gaming system of Claim 51, wherein each time interval is an equal interval of time.

Claim 54 (cancelled).

Claim 55 (currently amended): The gaming system of Claim 514, wherein when executed by the at least one processor, the plurality of instructions cause the at least one processor to determine and display at least one value-payout associated with at least one displayed outcome for at least one play of the game if the value total is greater than zero after the plurality of time intervals, wherein said determined value payout is based on any deducted fees.

Claim 56 (currently amended): The gaming system of Claim 514, wherein when executed by the at least one processor, the plurality of instructions cause the at least one processor to stop the deduction at least temporarily during the play-pause the plurality of intervals for a period of time, wherein during said period of time, no fees are deducted from the value total.

Claim 57 (withdrawn): A gaming system comprising:

at least one display device;

at least one input device;

at least one processor; and

at least one memory device which stores a plurality of instructions, which when executed by the at least one processor, cause the at least one processor to operate with the at least one display device and the at least one input device to:

(a) display to a player a graphical indicator of an amount of time the player is eligible to play a game;

(b) display to the player a decrease in said amount of time the player is eligible to play the game, wherein said displayed decrease is based on an amount of elapsed time;

(c) if the player inputs a value amount, display to the player an increase in said amount of time the player is eligible to play the game; and

(d) if the graphical indicator indicates that the player is eligible to play the game and a random determination occurs to trigger the game, determine and display a displayed outcome for said triggered game.

Claim 58 (withdrawn): The gaming system of Claim 57, wherein when executed by the at least one processor, the plurality of instructions cause the at least one processor to display the amount of time the player is eligible to play the game as a group of bars.

Claim 59 (withdrawn): The gaming system of Claim 57, wherein when executed by the at least one processor, the plurality of instructions cause the at least one processor to display a first amount of time the player is eligible to play the game a first color and display a second amount of time the player is eligible to play the game a second, different color.